THE NEW CAMBRIDGE
HISTORY OF
ISLAM

*

VOLUME 2
The Western Islamic World
Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries

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Edited by

MARIBEL FIERRO



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Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries

Volume 2 of *The New Cambridge History of Islam* is devoted to the history of the western Islamic lands from the political fragmenta tion of the eleventh century to the beginnings of European colo nialism towards the end of the eighteenth century. This volume embraces a vast area from al Andalus and North Africa to Arabia and the lands of the Ottomans. In the first four sections, scholars all leaders in their particular fields chart the rise and fall, and explain the political and religious developments, of the various independent ruling dynasties across the region, including famously the Almohads, the Faṭimids and Mamluks, and, of course, the Ottomans. The final section of this volume explores the commonalities and continuities that united these diverse and geographically disparate communities, through in depth analyses of state formation, conversion, taxation, scholarship and the military.

MARIBEL FIERRO is a Research Professor at the Center of Human and Social Sciences (CCHS) of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid. Her previous publications include *Al Andalus: Saberes e intercambios culturales* (2001), *Abd al Rahman III, the first Cordoban caliph* (2005), *Los Almohades: Problemas y perspectivas* (as co editor, 2005) and *El cuerpo derrotado: Cómo trataban musulmanes y cristianos a los enemigos vencidos (Península Ibérica, ss. VIII XIII)* (as co editor, 2008).

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF

ISLAM

The New Cambridge History of Islam offers a comprehensive history of Islamic civilisation, tracing its development from its beginnings in seventh century Arabia to its wide and varied presence in the globalised world of today. Under the leadership of the Prophet Muḥammad, the Muslim community coalesced from a scattered, desert population and, following his death, emerged from Arabia to conquer an empire which, by the early eighth century, stretched from India in the east to Spain in the west. By the eighteenth century, despite political fragmentation, the Muslim world extended from West Africa to South East Asia. Today, Muslims are also found in significant numbers in Europe and the Americas, and make up about one fifth of the world's population.

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STEPHEN CORY

Introduction

The early modern period was a time of transition for Morocco. Located close to western Europe, Morocco could not avoid being impacted by the changes going on in that continent. The country was significantly affected by the completion of the Christian *reconquista* of Iberia in 897/1492, along with the ongoing struggles and ultimate expulsion of the Moriscos and 'New Christians'. Since the Portuguese launched their first colonial enterprise in Morocco, and Spain later established outposts along the North African coastline, Morocco would become one of the first Islamic countries to be confronted with European imperial ambitions.

In addition, Moroccan autonomy was threatened from the east by Ottoman expansion into North Africa during the early tenth/sixteenth century. The Ottomans presented a unique challenge in that, as co-religionists, they appealed to Moroccan leaders in the name of Islamic unity and as defenders of the abode of Islam (*dār al-islām*) from the Christian Europeans. Nevertheless, Ottoman 'protection' would include subsuming Morocco into its system, making Moroccan leaders accountable for directives from Istanbul. Such a situation would grant the Ottomans access to the Atlantic Ocean, and for this reason the Sublime Porte frequently meddled in Moroccan politics leading to periodic open conflicts between the two Islamic states. In the end, the Ottomans were unsuccessful in controlling Morocco and in obtaining their coveted Atlantic port. Nevertheless, the proximity of so many acquisitive world powers profoundly influenced Morocco's political, intellectual and religious development during this period.

Just as important were internal realities that challenged any leader who sought to establish a centralised government. During this period the concept of a Moroccan state, comprising a territory roughly corresponding to its current borders, became widely accepted by most Moroccans. This does not

mean that Morocco comprised a unified entity, however. Historical and geographical factors contributed to a decentralised system in which family, tribe, spiritual leaders and region were more important for individuals than any conception of a Moroccan identity. Morocco's heavy dependence upon subsistence agriculture, its lack of an established central bureaucracy, the decline of the trans-Saharan caravan trade, the difficulty of collecting taxes and the aforementioned meddling of outside powers all helped create a situation in which Moroccan administrations struggled to fund and maintain the basic services expected of central governments. The rise of Sharīfian regimes during this period paradoxically meant that Morocco was ruled by governments with considerable religious legitimacy, yet which were rarely able to exert effective control throughout most of the country.

Moroccan political history during the tenth/sixteenth to twelfth/eighteenth centuries reflects an era in which two dominant sultans – Mawlāy Aḥmad al-Manṣūr (r. 985–1011/1578–1603) and Mawlāy Ismāʿīl (r. 1082–1139/1672–1727) – were able to create prosperous and relatively successful states, while several other sultans succeeded in maintaining sufficient central (*makhzan*) authority to sustain functional governments. Yet these periods of comparative stability were sandwiched around extended interludes of unrest (*fitna*) during which political authority was divided among a number of competitors, making the establishment of an effective central state a near impossibility. This reality led later historians to posit a division between *bilād al-makhzan* (lands that submitted to the authority of the central government) and *bilād al-sība* (lands that resisted this authority), while attributing this situation to influences such as 'tribalism' or a supposed 'maraboutic crisis'. The political instability helps explain how a country located so close to Europe could appear so isolated and backward that contemporary European visitors described Morocco's government as ramshackle, the country as poor and the people as ignorant.

Despite such obstacles, the Saʿdī and early ʿAlawī dynasties laid the foundations for a surprisingly durable political system, and the ʿAlawī state would become one of the few Islamic governments to survive European colonialism in the modern period. Although repeatedly the target of acquisitive designs by powers stronger than itself, Morocco maintained its independence through the end of the nineteenth century CE. Profoundly affected by the demise of al-Andalus, Moroccans nonetheless continued to develop their shared cultural heritage into the modern era. Ruled by leaders who claimed lineal descent from the Prophet Muḥammad and who referred to themselves by the caliphal title, Commander of the Faithful (*amīr al-muʾminīn*), Morocco would enter the modern period with a weak central government but a strong sense of its social,

religious and cultural identity, the parameters of which were forged during the tenth/sixteenth through the twelfth/eighteenth centuries.

The rise of the Saʿdī dynasty

The Saʿdī dynasty first arose in the early tenth/sixteenth century, largely in response to Portuguese incursions from their fortresses along the Atlantic coast. These strongholds had been established during a period of aggressive Portuguese expansion that began with the conquest of Ceuta in 818/1415. During the following century, the Portuguese created a series of outposts from Aṣīla in the north to Santa Cruz (modern Agadir) in the south. At the same time, the Moroccan Marīnid dynasty was in its death throes, eventually being co-opted by its allies, the Waṭṭāsids, who ruled from 823/1420 in the Marīnids' name.

Despite this transition in power, the Waṭṭāsids proved to be no more successful in combating the Portuguese than the Marīnids had been. Unable to expel the Portuguese militarily, the Waṭṭāsids made deals with the foreign invaders to preserve their own authority in northern Morocco.[1] By the late ninth/fifteenth century, the southern portion of the country was controlled by various tribal leaders who acknowledged Waṭṭāsid authority in name only, while contending with each other and the Portuguese for regional dominance. Meanwhile, the European states of Genoa, Venice, Flanders, France, England and Spain competed with the Portuguese for Moroccan trade, exchanging firearms and other European goods for sugar, saltpetre, and mineral resources. Morocco seemed to be overrun by foreigners, a fact that was not missed by local *ʿulamāʾ* and Sufi shaykhs.

Faced with this impotence by the ruling house, localised opposition to the Portuguese arose in the south, particularly in the Dukkala and the Sūs, where most of the Portuguese economic exploitation was taking place. The Portuguese and a few local allies had committed some notorious abuses, which outraged the inhabitants of Dukkala.[2] Saʿdī authority first appeared in the Sūs and Draʿ regions, both of which had been free of government control for over 200 years. In the absence of a strong central authority, the heads of religious orders and local saint cults played an important role in maintaining the necessary alliances for social co-operation and trade. Several *zāwiya*s allied with regional Sharīfian families and became centres of local resistance to the Portuguese.

In the midst of these circumstances, the most influential Sūsī shaykh, Sīdī Mubārak, suggested the people turn to the Sharīf Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Zaydānī of Tagmadart for leadership. In 915/1510 some local tribes took an

oath of allegiance to the Sharīf. He chose the millenarian title al-Qāʾim bi amr Allāh (One Who Has Arisen by the Command of God). Al-Qāʾim's open reliance upon mahdist and prophetic imagery, along with his initial backing from regional shaykhs, gave the Saʿdīs the reputation of being jihad warriors, who utilised religious enthusiasm against the Portuguese in their rise to power.

The growing importance of Sharīfian ideology in Morocco was another element in the Saʿdī ascent. Indeed, the Saʿdīs used their Sharīfian identity as a trump card against the Waṭṭāsids. Sharīfian influence had been increasing since the early ninth/fifteenth century. The movement fed off frustration with the Marīnids, who were accused of not properly honouring the *shurafāʾ*, and encouragement from the important Jazūliyya Sufi order. In 840/1437, the Waṭṭāsids attempted to regain control of these forces when they 'rediscovered' the tomb of the famous Sharīfian leader Idrīs II in Fez. However, this event simply added fuel to the fire. Rising Sharīfian power eventually enabled the *shurafāʾ* to establish a short-lived Sharīfian state in Fez during 869/1465, although the Waṭṭāsids reconquered the city in 875/1471.[3] Thus, there was an increasing expectation that only Sharīfian leadership could restore peace and prosperity to Morocco.

Some historians argue that religious fervour alone was insufficient to catapult the Saʿdīs into prominence. Vincent Cornell makes the case that the early Saʿdī leaders recognised the importance of establishing a solid economic foundation for their state, and that they demonstrated shrewd management in developing independent funding sources, primarily through trade with Europeans and promoting the sugar cane industry.[4] In addition, the early Saʿdīs managed effectively to organise and unify the southern regions. Al-Qāʾim capitalised upon traditional tribal alliances to gather a large group of supporters. His sons, Aḥmad al-Aʿraj and Muḥammad al-Shaykh, obtained recognition from the Waṭṭāsids as regional leaders, further strengthening their legitimacy.[5] Although Aḥmad al-Aʿraj was the older of the two, his younger brother's superior talents would eventually eclipse him.

Muḥammad al-Shaykh made Tarudant his base of operations in 920/1514. The high regard accorded to him, even by the Portuguese, demonstrates the breadth of his influence. In 931/1525, Aḥmad al-Aʿraj captured Marrakesh and made it his capital. Both brothers traded with European merchants for gunpowder weapons and hired Ottoman mercenaries and European renegades to train their soldiers in military techniques. This approach paid off when the Saʿdīs took Santa Cruz in 947/1541. Shortly afterwards, the Portuguese abandoned Azammur and Safi, and Muḥammad al-Shaykh consolidated his

authority by deposing and exiling his brother. In less than three decades, al-Shaykh had become the supreme leader of southern Morocco.

A skilled politician, Muḥammad al-Shaykh maintained his messianic image by taking the title 'al-Mahdī', while at the same time working to isolate the Waṭṭāsids through separate alliances with European states. Al-Shaykh also sought to re-establish the Saharan trade, disrupted by Portuguese and Bedouin raids. In 949–50/1543–4, he sent an expedition to the western Sahara, intending to facilitate trade through alliances with Saharan tribes, and to gain jurisdiction over the important salt mines at Ijil. By 961/1554, Muḥammad al-Shaykh had conquered Fez and eliminated the Waṭṭāsid dynasty. Now controlling the entire country, al-Shaykh eliminated potential challengers by repressing important religious scholars and Sufi leaders. It was clear that he did not intend to share power with anybody.

Although he relied upon Turkish mercenary troops as a key element in his army, Muḥammad al-Shaykh had poor relations with the Ottoman government. He was not pleased when the Ottomans backed the Waṭṭāsids in opposition to his own bid for power. Al-Shaykh showed this distaste through frequent verbal slights of Ottoman claims to leadership in the Islamic world. He clearly implied his own superiority through derisive references to the Ottoman sultan as 'The Sultan of the Fishermen' and his statement that he would meet the Ottomans in Cairo.[6] It was for such swagger as this, put into action when Muḥammad al-Shaykh briefly conquered Tlemcen on the western borders of Ottoman territory, that Süleymān the Magnificent had the Saʿdī leader assassinated in 964/1557.

Muḥammad al-Shaykh was succeeded by his eldest son, ʿAbd Allāh al-Ghālib, who placed less emphasis upon the use of messianic imagery, although he did not stray from the dynasty's reliance upon Sharīfian claims to legitimacy. Al-Ghālib followed his father's example in at least one area, when he ordered the assassination of potential rivals within his family. For this reason his brothers ʿAbd al-Muʾmin, ʿAbd al-Malik and Aḥmad fled Morocco together and took up residence with the Turks in Algiers. Even at this distance, al-Ghālib was able to arrange for the assassination of ʿAbd al-Muʾmin. When the sultan passed away after a seventeen-year reign, the pathway appeared clear for his eldest son, Muḥammad al-Mutawakkil, to take his place as ruler.

ʿAbd al-Malik had been planning for this moment for a number of years. Although neither al-Ghālib nor his son had tried to improve relations with the Ottomans, ʿAbd al-Malik had used his time in Algiers to good advantage by establishing positive connections with top Ottoman officials. Al-Ghālib's death

in 981/1574 presented ʿAbd al-Malik with the opportunity he had been waiting for. He persuaded the Ottomans to outfit him with an army, which he led to victory over al-Mutawakkil outside of Fez in 983/1576. ʿAbd al-Malik's spies had assured him that there was considerable receptivity to his return in Morocco, and they managed to persuade a sizeable battalion of tribal warriors to desert al-Mutawakkil in the heat of battle.[7] Triumphant at last, ʿAbd al-Malik marched into Fez as the new Saʿdī sultan, while assigning his younger brother, Aḥmad, to capture al-Mutawakkil, who had fled south to the Sūs. After a year of skirmishes in the south, the deposed sultan escaped north again, making it to Aṣīla, whence he sailed to Portugal. Unable to rally sufficient support in Morocco to reinstall himself as sultan, and permanently alienated from the Ottomans, al-Mutawakkil sought help from the only available source, the Portuguese Christian infidels and their young king, Don Sebastian.

The events that followed al-Mutawakkil's flight are among the best known in Saʿdī history, and have been recounted many times in European and Moroccan literature. Don Sebastian, concerned with the waning glory of the Portuguese empire and seeking to regain ground lost to the Saʿdīs, personally joined al-Mutawakkil with a force of between 18,000 and 20,000 European soldiers. They sailed to Aṣīla, whence they marched to meet a much larger Saʿdī army at Wādī ʾl-Makhāzin,[8] near al-Qaṣr al-Kabīr in north-western Morocco. In the ensuing battle, the Europeans were completely routed and both Don Sebastian and al-Mutawakkil were killed. ʿAbd al-Malik also died during the course of the conflict, most likely of illness. When the dust settled, the one remaining leader was ʿAbd al-Malik's younger brother, Aḥmad, who ascended the Moroccan throne with a title intended to commemorate the great victory. Henceforth he would be known as Aḥmad al-Manṣūr (the victorious).

Aḥmad al-Manṣūr: the Golden Sultan

The reign of Aḥmad al-Manṣūr represents the high point of Saʿdī rule. In fact, al-Manṣūr's era is often viewed as a golden age for Morocco. For twenty-five years Morocco experienced a rare stretch of peace and prosperity during which the economy was strong and internal opposition was largely controlled. In fact, apart from the seventeen-year reign of al-Ghālib, Mawlāy Aḥmad was the only sultan to rule the entire country between the collapse of Marīnid power in the early ninth/fifteenth century and the establishment of ʿAlawī authority in the late eleventh/seventeenth century. Al-Manṣūr achieved this monopoly of power by focusing on four areas: (1) developing a strong military; (2) keeping the Spanish and Ottomans at bay through a combination

of fortuitous circumstances and diplomatic skill; (3) obtaining considerable economic strength by ransoming European captives, regularly collecting taxes, and controlling the Saharan caravan trade; and (4) buttressing his political legitimacy by promoting himself as a Sharīfian Arab caliph in contrast to the Ottomans, who were neither *shurafāʿ* nor Arab, and therefore (according to al-Manṣūr) not worthy for the caliphate.

Following his victory at Wādī al-Makhāzin, al-Manṣūr used his military to subdue internal opposition and expand his state. Weston Cook has demonstrated that the Saʿdīs developed an effective early modern army based on firearms during their six-decade struggle against the Waṭṭāsids and the Portuguese. Utilising a base of Sūsī and Morisco troops, the Saʿdīs supplemented with renegades and *jaysh* tribal warriors.[9] Al-Manṣūr assigned *qāʾids* to lead periodic raids against dissident tribes and collect taxes throughout the country. Within a few years of obtaining the sultanate, Mawlāy Aḥmad felt secure enough to send expeditionary forces towards the southern caravan trade routes. Between 991/1583 and 999/1591, al-Manṣūr planned, equipped and launched an invasion across the Sahara of the West African Songhay dynasty. This conquest brought great wealth and tremendous prestige to Mawlāy Aḥmad, even though Morocco's hold upon West Africa would turn out to be tenuous and short.[10]

Although the military maintained al-Manṣūr's authority within Morocco and expanded it into West Africa, the art of diplomacy provided a much more effective defence against stronger regimes in Madrid and Ottoman Algiers. The sultan's royal correspondence demonstrates his ability to play off the Ottomans against the Spaniards, professing friendship to both regimes while utilising their fear of driving him into the arms of the other to avoid making significant concessions.[11] In the 990s/1580s, when Ottoman attention was redirected towards the east after their truce with Spain, Mawlāy Aḥmad made overtures to Queen Elizabeth and took advantage of England's competition with Spain to play the two European powers against one another. Although Philip II pressured al-Manṣūr for several years to cede him the Atlantic port of Larache, Mawlāy Aḥmad not only avoided making this concession, but also received back Aṣīla from Spain in 997/1589 when Philip sought to curry favour with the Moroccan monarch following the devastating English victory over the Spanish Armada. The perceived importance of Morocco in English foreign policy is reflected in the repeated appearance of Moroccan figures in plays performed on the Elizabethan stage.[12]

One of the main reasons that al-Manṣūr could finance a regular army and exert some diplomatic independence was the financial resources that he commanded for most of his reign. Preceding Saʿdī sultans had traded actively

with European merchants, exchanging goods like sugar and saltpetre for the firearms that helped fuel their early conquests.[13] However, al-Manṣūr added to this income source a considerable amount of ransom money obtained for thousands of European prisoners of war in the years following the battle of Wādī al-Makhāzin.[14] Captives for whom he could not obtain a ransom were sold off as slaves. In addition, al-Manṣūr's military might allowed him to collect taxes throughout the country on a more regular basis than his predecessors, a fact that is reflected in complaints about heavy taxation found in the sources.[15] Finally, al-Manṣūr's conquest of West Africa yielded so much wealth that he became known as 'al-Dhahabī' (The Golden One). Both Moroccan and European sources contain abundant stories of the sultan's conspicuous affluence.[16]

In addition to lavishing wealth upon court poets, favourite servants and other allies, al-Manṣūr directed a considerable amount of his financial reserves to building a magnificent palace in the midst of the *qaṣba* in Marrakesh. He began construction of this edifice shortly after obtaining power in 985/1578 and did not complete it until some sixteen years later. The centrepiece of the palace was a huge rectangular reception hall named al-Badīʿ (the Marvellous). Aiming to awe visitors with the sultan's wealth and power, al-Badīʿ utilised Andalusī architectural themes on a scale that seems intended to rival the Ottoman Topkapı palace, which al-Manṣūr probably visited while in exile among the Ottoman Turks during the reign of al-Ghālib.

The sultan primarily used al-Badīʿ as a reception hall for foreign delegations. It also served as the site for al-Manṣūr's annual celebration of the Prophet's birthday, the *mawlid al-nabī*. Mawlāy Aḥmad placed considerable emphasis upon this festival, which provided a stage upon which he could visually reinforce his Sharīfian caliphal identity before large numbers of subjects and royal visitors. Primary sources record the stunning impression that this celebration made upon all who were present, an impression highlighted by the magnificent setting of the palace.[17]

The earliest Saʿdī sultans had staked the dynasty's claims to authority on their Prophetic descent. Nevertheless, it was Aḥmad al-Manṣūr who decisively established Sharīfian lineage as a requirement for all future Moroccan sultans. Using panegyric writings and elaborate ceremonies, al-Manṣūr vividly connected Sharīfian lineage to caliphal authority to a degree that had not been seen since the Fāṭimid rulers of Cairo. Such assertions automatically set the Saʿdī state in opposition to the larger Ottoman dynasty, which also claimed the right to lead the Islamic world. Like his father, al-Manṣūr initially flaunted Ottoman authority, a reckless action that almost led to an Ottoman invasion in

988/1580.[18] After this near miss, Mawlāy Aḥmad was careful to show respect to the Ottomans, while continuing to declare his caliphal supremacy before his own people. Following the Ottoman peace with Spain, al-Manṣūr seems to have felt free to assert these claims more openly once again, even to the point of making provocative statements in correspondence to Ottoman leaders in Algiers.[19] In the same way, he used his position as rightful caliph over the Islamic world to justify an invasion of the neighbouring Muslim Songhay dynasty in West Africa, and seems to have accepted an oath of allegiance from the Bornu of Central Africa.[20] Mawlāy Aḥmad also made alliances and sought to promote himself as an Arab alternative to the Ottomans in eastern provinces such as Egypt.[21] The tone of his propaganda and the allusions in his ceremonies have convinced some modern historians that al-Manṣūr was implicitly making mahdist claims for himself.[22]

The sultan's propaganda exploited the prestige of the *shurafāʾ* and connected his regime to earlier caliphates such as the ʿAbbāsids. Al-Manṣūr portrayed his military and diplomatic triumphs as the natural results of his caliphal supremacy. Though the Saʿdī dynasty would unravel upon his death in 1011/1603, al-Manṣūr's rhetoric was so effective that it took another Sharīfian family finally to reunite the country sixty-five years later. Though the ʿAlawīs disputed the authenticity of the Saʿdīs' Sharīfian lineage, they implemented much of al-Manṣūr's rhetorical imagery into their own panegyric ceremonies.

The Saʿdī *fitna*

As powerful as the government of Aḥmad al-Manṣūr appeared to be, the central authority of his *makhzan* fell apart during an extensive civil war waged by his descendants. This rapid collapse, brought on by an implosion of the Saʿdī state rather than defeat by an outside power, demonstrates the ultimate failure of al-Manṣūr's policies. By focusing on restoring a past caliphal golden age, Mawlāy Aḥmad had not developed an infrastructure to support Morocco's transition to a modern state. Rather, his success was based upon a combination of fortuitous circumstances and personal aptitudes such as people skills, attention to detail, and ability to balance different interests to maximise his resources. However, beginning in 1003/1595, circumstances turned against the Saʿdīs through a series of plagues, famines and costly rebellions. In addition, the Moroccan failure to maintain political control over West Africa cut off an important source of revenue for the state. Finally, al-Manṣūr's heir apparent, Muḥammad al-Shaykh al-Maʾmūn, turned

out to be corrupt and incompetent. His failed rebellion in 1010/1602 meant that al-Ma'mūn was in prison when his father died, so that the sultanate was available to whichever Saʿdī contender could overpower the others.

As the sultan's three sons and two of his grandsons battled for supremacy, the country descended into a long and destructive period of *fitna*. Never again would a Saʿdī sultan rule over both Marrakesh and Fez, as the two cities became rival capitals for competing Saʿdī princes. While the Saʿdīs fought among themselves, other challengers arose to establish independent principalities throughout the country. Led by a variety of military, tribal and spiritual leaders, the various contenders wreaked havoc upon one another and upon the Moroccan countryside. The long-term consequences of this extended period of unrest included the almost complete devastation of the Saharan trade, which for centuries had been a reliable source of income for the country. By the early twelfth/eighteenth century, when Mawlāy Ismāʿīl attempted to re-establish Moroccan control in the Sahara, much of the trade had been rerouted to Mediterranean destinations east of Morocco or diverted by European merchants along the Gold Coast of West Africa.

With the loss of the Saharan trade profits, Morocco's economic potential became increasingly bound up with its dealings with Europe. The most lucrative avenue for such dealings came through the burgeoning corsair movement that arose in Rabat/Salé during the early eleventh/seventeenth century. This business profited from both the collapse of the Moroccan central government and the expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain between 1017/1609 and 1023/1614. Many of these Moriscos ended up in Morocco, and their entry rejuvenated the moribund cities of Rabat and Tetouan. In the former location, the Moriscos established an independent community across the Bū Ragrāg river from Salé. Over the course of several decades, the Andalusīs of Rabat launched an effective corsair movement that served the dual purposes of supporting their community and taking revenge upon Spain.

In addition to profiting from the contraband acquired through seizing European merchant ships, the corsairs obtained ransoms for captured crew members or sold these unfortunates as slaves. The jihadist nature of their operations increased when Rabat/Salé came under the influence of Muḥammad al-ʿAyyāshī in 1024/1615. This Arab military leader used the twin cities as a base for attacking Spanish enclaves, profiting from the corsair trade, and eliminating Saʿdī authority in north-west Morocco. However, his authoritarian tendencies alienated most of his Andalusi clientele, which was relieved to be free of him after he was ambushed and killed by troops from the Dilā'ī *zāwiya* in 1050/1641. In addition, Jerome Weiner argues that al-ʿAyyāshī's

strict commitment to jihad against Spain eventually clashed with the goals of the Rabati Moriscos. Some of them seem to have been negotiating a separate peace with the Spanish, which would have surrendered the *qaṣba* of Rabat to Spain in exchange for clemency allowing the Moriscos to return to their beloved homeland. The proposed agreement fell apart owing to Spanish prevarication, internal conflicts among the Rabatis, al-ʿAyyāshī's oppression of the Andalusis, and the eventual Dilāʾī takeover of Rabat/Salé.[23]

Other military leaders who touted their credentials as jihad warriors played upon Moroccan fears of the infidel to develop local power-bases, even though most of them imitated al-ʿAyyāshī by trading with the Europeans and spent more time fighting other Muslims than they did combating infidels. But perhaps most effective were Sufi holy men who parlayed their reputation as spiritual leaders into worldly authority during the early eleventh/seventeenth century. This was the era of the 'maraboutic crisis' widely discussed in French historiography by writers such as Jacques Berque. The title 'marabout' is a corruption of the Arabic *murābiṭ*, which describes a charismatic spiritual leader known for *baraka* (spiritual power) as manifested through miracle working, an ability to intercede between warring groups of Muslims, and pious deeds. Many of these *murābiṭ*s enhanced their spiritual prestige by claiming Sharīfian status and used their Sufi lodges (*zāwiya*s) as centres from which they expanded their regional influence. Although Berque and others see the *murābiṭ*s as destructive elements that undermined the legitimate Moroccan government, these holy men maintained their influence over local communities even during periods when a relatively strong central government was in place. Their eleventh/seventeenth-century entrance into the political arena came in response to the Saʿdī collapse but did not initiate it.

The first of the *murābiṭ*s directly to challenge Saʿdī authority was Ibn Abī Maḥallī who proclaimed himself to be the *mahdī* shortly after al-Maʾmūn surrendered the port of Larache to Spain in 1018/1610. Ibn Abī Maḥallī garnered sufficient support to conquer Sijilmāsa later that year. He took Marrakesh in 1021/1612 when the Saʿdī prince Mawlāy Zaydān abandoned the capital after a major victory by the mahdist forces. However, Zaydān would reclaim Marrakesh the following year after rallying the Sūsī *murābiṭ* Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥāḥī to his cause. Ibn Abī Maḥallī was killed in a battle outside the city walls, and his forces rapidly dispersed upon his death. Despite the short-lived nature of his rebellion, García-Arenal views Ibn Abī Maḥallī as a prime example of a pre-modern Maghribi messiah. Such leaders drew upon deeply rooted Moroccan longings for spiritual and societal revival under the leadership of a charismatic holy man whose ascent to power would usher in

the ultimate triumph of Islam. Ibn Abī Maḥallī combined extensive training in the religious sciences, mystical divine illumination and positional holiness acquired through an alleged Sharīfian descent. Thus he brought together varying paths to personal sanctity often portrayed as diametrically opposed in the *madrasa* versus *zāwiya* dialectic that underlies the theory of the 'maraboutic crisis'. In contrast, García-Arenal reaffirms the conclusion of other historians who argue for the interconnected nature of these variant roads to spiritual power in the careers of the early modern *murābiṭ*s.[24]

Of these *murābiṭ*s, none was more successful in the eleventh/seventeenth century than the *zāwiya* of Dilāʾ. Its influence expanded outward from the Middle Atlas by 1041/1632, under the leadership of Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr and Muḥammad al-Ḥājj. Initially an offshoot of the Jazūliyya that undertook its spiritual work among Middle Atlas Berbers, the Dilāʾiyya allied themselves with the Saʿdīs during the reigns of ʿAbd Allāh al-Ghālib and Aḥmad al-Manṣūr. When the Saʿdī government collapsed, the Dilāʾī leadership took on a more overtly political role, first in the Middle Atlas and eventually throughout northern Morocco. Its prestige was originally derived not only from its staunch Sufi message honouring the Prophet Muḥammad and the *shurafāʾ* but also from its extensive charitable services, which created a sense of Dilāʾī piety and a strong loyalty among the recipients of these services. The Dilāʾiyya eventually created their own army and established fortified outposts throughout their realms. They promoted learning in their *zāwiya*s, which became widely respected as centres of scholarship. Dilāʾī influence increased to the point that they gained control of most of northern Morocco, including Fez, Rabat/Salé and Tetouan. By 1047/1638 they began to deal directly with Europeans, were viewed as the de facto rulers of the north, and seemed to be the most likely successors to the Saʿdīs in uniting the entire country.

However, the Dilāʾiyya were unable to achieve this goal, partially because their open identification with Berber interests alienated Arab tribes. Some of these joined forces with al-ʿAyyāshī, who battled with the *zāwiya* for control in the north. After al-ʿAyyāshī's defeat in 1050/1641, some Arab leaders began to ally themselves with southern contenders for power such as the *murābiṭ* ʿAlī Abū Ḥassūn al-Samlālī in the Sūs. Weiner speculates that the central location of the *zāwiya* worked against it, since the Dilāʾiyya had to expand both to the north and the south, as opposed to most Moroccan dynasties which arose in the southern regions.[25] However, the biggest hindrance to Dilāʾī success in uniting Morocco was the fact that they could not claim Sharīfian status. This weakness left the door open for the rise of another Sharīfian family, when the ʿAlawīs extended their authority beyond their home base in the Tafilalt oasis.

By 1060/1650, the ʿAlawī leader Muḥammad al-Sharīf had established alliances with disenchanted northern Arab tribes, paving the way for his brother Mawlāy Rashīd to reunite the country when he conquered both Fez and Marrakesh in 1078/1668.

Nevertheless, the new conqueror suffered an untimely death in 1082/1672, leaving the sultanate to his untested younger brother Mawlāy Ismāʿīl. Much as Aḥmad al-Manṣūr had arisen from the shadow of his older brother almost 100 years earlier, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl was destined to become one of the most influential rulers in Moroccan history. His fifty-five-year reign cemented ʿAlawī authority in Morocco, to the degree that more than two centuries of instability and weakness following his death failed to loosen the ʿAlawī hold on the sultanate.

Mawlāy Ismāʿīl and the ʿAlawī dynasty

Like al-Manṣūr, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl initially had to defeat internal competitors to establish his authority. In Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's case, the sternest challenge came from his nephew, Aḥmad ibn Muḥriz, who managed to garner support for his rebellion in different regions up to his death in 1097/1686. Just as troublesome was a series of rebellions sponsored by Ottoman clients, including the Dilāʾī shaykh Aḥmad al-Dilāʾī, who created problems for Mawlāy Ismāʿīl in the Middle Atlas mountains. He was not eliminated until 1091/1680, after which his rebellion fizzled out.

As a result of such sustained opposition to his rule, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl seems to have derived the conclusion that his only security lay in separating himself from the society that he governed, much as the Ottoman sultans had done in their domains. Using his Sharīfian status as justification, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl undertook to establish his dominance over all other challengers, including regional/tribal leaders and religious authorities (both *murābiṭ*s and traditional ʿ*ulamā*ʾ), who sought to undermine the sultan's religious legitimacy and/or circumscribe his actions by reference to religious law.

In order to defeat military challenges to his authority, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl developed a professional army that included two corps. The first was the Wadāya, consisting of Arab warriors extracted from their tribal setting and enlisted into regiments serving under the sultan's authority. The second, and more significant, was a black slave army that became known as the ʿAbīd al-Bukhārī.[26] Mawlāy Ismāʿīl seems to have initiated this army out of a desire to establish a military force loyal only to himself. It is estimated that there were around 50,000 ʿAbīd soldiers at the end of his reign.[27] Theoretically slaves,

many of the ʿAbīd were originally free black Muslims who were forcibly conscripted into the military. Mawlāy Ismāʿīl established a training centre for the ʿAbīd in Meknes, where they were instructed in crafts and the martial arts. Many of the ʿAbīd remained stationed in Meknes, which became the centre of ʿAbīd power. Others were assigned to man various fortresses established throughout the Middle Atlas and on Morocco's eastern frontier, where Mawlāy Ismāʿīl had received the stiffest challenges to his authority.

The creation of these military forces not only allowed Mawlāy Ismāʿīl to establish unchallenged supremacy within the country, but also encouraged him to extend his influence outward. As a result, the sultan increasingly began to assert himself in three directions: (1) eastward towards the Ottomans, whose attempts to unseat him could not be forgotten; (2) southward towards the Sahara, where Mawlāy Ismāʿīl hoped to revive the trans-Saharan trade under Moroccan authority; and (3) northward and westward towards the European enclaves that served as irritating reminders of superior European power, even as they provided footholds for the Spanish and British in Morocco. In all three cases, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl experienced some initial success, but would fall short of achieving his ultimate goals.

Mawlāy Ismāʿīl seems to have been particularly motivated to portray himself as leader of jihad against the foreign infidel. Jihad rhetoric appeared in all his dealings with Europeans, including his regular attacks upon the coastal enclaves, his royal correspondence with European monarchs (in which he frequently called upon them to embrace Islam), and his refusal to ransom European prisoners without the corresponding release of at least a token number of Muslim captives. In fact, it was primarily the French refusal to release Muslim captives (the French relied heavily upon such prisoners to man their galleys) that created poor relations between Morocco and France during Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's reign.

In contrast, the Dutch and English continued to negotiate with Morocco, largely because those two countries were motivated to curtail corsair attacks cutting into their international shipping profits. Viewing the corsair expeditions as a particularly effective form of jihad, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl incorporated the Rabat/Salé corsairs into his military system, eventually transferring most European captives to his direct control in Meknes. Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's ability to control the corsairs enabled him to obtain considerable weaponry and munitions from the English and Dutch, which he could then use to besiege Spanish and Ottoman fortresses in North Africa. Thus Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's jihads were largely dependent upon European supplies, a fact that would not bode well for Morocco's future relations with European powers.[28]

Jihad not only justified Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's foreign policy, it also provided an excuse for the sultan to consolidate his power within Morocco. The need to finance jihad was cited as the reason for increased taxation and sometimes outright plunder of adversaries, such as his pillage of Fez in 1132/1720. The jihad justified harsh retribution taken against the sultan's opponents, whose resistance could then be portrayed as detrimental to the interests of Islam. Just as important, the jihad allowed Mawlāy Ismāʿīl to increase his recruitment and seizure of black 'slaves' in order to create new regiments of ʿAbīd troops. The dubious nature of this enterprise is reflected in the repeated criticism that the sultan received from the *ʿulamāʾ* of Fez. The issue proved to be a constant point of friction between the sultan and the Fezzi elite.

In fact, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's relations with the self-proclaimed religious capital of Morocco were decidedly poor. They began on a bad note when the Fezzis opted to support Aḥmad ibn Muḥriz's rebellion at the beginning of Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's reign. It took fourteen months for Mawlāy Ismāʿīl to conquer the city, after which he executed a number of Fezzi leaders and replaced others. Leading members of the Fezzi *ʿulamāʾ* were critical of Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's policies, including his use of non-canonical taxes and forced recruitment of black slave soldiers. An example of Fezzi complaints can be seen in an open letter of reproof that the respected scholar Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Yūsī sent to the sultan in 1090/1679.[29] Al-Yūsī criticises the sultan for the oppressive actions of his tax collectors. He also accuses him of failing adequately to promote jihad and uphold justice throughout the land. He encourages Mawlāy Ismāʿīl to seek counsel from the *ʿulamāʾ* in order to learn how to rule his subjects according to God's will. Al-Yūsī strongly implies that the sultan's reign is in jeopardy, should Mawlāy Ismāʿīl fail to heed his warning. 'If [the sultan] rules unjustly, violently, arrogantly, oppressively, and corruptly, then he will … be subject to the terrible punishment and wrath of God on high.'[30] Mawlāy Ismāʿīl could not afford to take such a threat lightly, especially when pronounced by a respected holy man with Dilāʾī connections and extensive support both in Fez and in the Middle Atlas.

As a result of such opposition, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's dealings with the Fezzis were frequently harsh, including periodically removing key political and religious leaders from their positions, imposing heavy tax burdens upon the Fezzi elite, and dealing out exemplary punishments and executions to deter the possibility of revolt. Having been reprimanded by Fezzi *ʿulamāʾ*, the sultan wrote his own letters of reproof to them, including an epistle in 1108/1697 in which he rebuked the *ʿulamāʾ* for their opposition over the issue of the ʿAbīd, and another letter in which he attempted to set the common people against

the religious leaders, by praising the former and rebuking/removing the latter from their positions. In 1119/1708, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl forced the leading Fezzi ʿ*ulamāʾ* to sign a register of the ʿAbīd, indicating their acceptance of the sultan's policies. Those who refused to do so were jailed and their property was confiscated.[31] In general, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl seems to have equated Fezzi disapproval as tantamount to rebellion and to have viewed Fezzi religious authority as a challenge to his own. For this reason, the sultan established ʿAbīd troops in the fortresses overlooking the old city and he also placed a regiment in New Fez (Fās al-Jadīd) to assure his continued control.

Fez's loss was Meknes' gain. After his initial troubles with the Fezzis, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl established his capital in Meknes, located on the other side of the Sais plain and historically a competitor for influence with the more prestigious Fez. The sultan then spent the remainder of his reign turning Meknes into a true capital, funding the construction of new city walls, building sizeable community mosques and other religious structures, and making it the central location for the ʿAbīd. Most impressive among Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's building projects was the construction of a massive palace intended to rival the Versailles of France. Jealous of any rivals to his glory, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl ordered the destruction of Aḥmad al-Manṣūr's opulent Badīʿ palace in Marrakesh, utilising many of the recycled building materials in constructing his own palace.

Mawlāy Ismāʿīl could be a harsh taskmaster and would not allow anybody to cross him. He is known for the massive dungeons that he constructed underneath Meknes, which are said to have held thousands of prisoners. The sultan used captured European slaves and criminals as forced labour in his building projects, treating them so harshly that many died in the process of carrying out their tasks. As a result of his powerful military and his reputation for harsh justice, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl is also known for maintaining an unprecedented level of security on the roads, to the degree that the historian al-Nāṣirī reports 'a Jew or a woman could go from Oujda to the Oued Noun without a soul daring to ask whence they came or whither they were going'.[32]

Mawlāy Ismāʿīl continued the Saʿdī policy of highlighting his Sharīfian lineage as the primary justification for his rule and of laying claim to the caliphal title of *amīr al-muʾminīn*. He showered privileges upon the *shurafāʾ*, making alliances with particular groups such as the *shurafāʾ* of Wazzān. By exalting the *shurafāʾ* and demoting the ʿ*ulamāʾ*, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl sought to drive a wedge between those two groups in Fez and to raise his own position even above that of the *sharīʿa* (traditionally the stronghold of the ʿ*ulamāʾ*). At the same time that he was criticising and restricting the ʿ*ulamāʾ*, Mawlāy Ismāʿīl added to Sharīfian prestige in Fez by financing a massive upgrade of the shrine

of Mawlāy Idrīs II, as well as making improvements to the mausoleum of Mawlāy Idrīs I near Meknes.[33]

But among the *shurafā'*, Mawlāy Ismā'īl placed the 'Alawī family at the top. In fact, if Aḥmad al-Manṣūr can be credited with firmly establishing the principle of the Sharīfian *amīr al-mu'minīn* as head of the Moroccan state, Mawlāy Ismā'īl should be seen as the architect of the ultimate triumph of the 'Alawīs as the dominant Sharīfian family in Morocco. He contributed to their dominance through his long reign and through fathering some 500 sons, many of whom rose to prominent positions throughout the country.

Fitna once again

If Mawlāy Ismā'īl contributed to 'Alawī dominance through his prodigious progeny, he did not add to dynastic stability. Although he reigned for an unprecedented fifty-five years and exercised a level of authority unparalleled in pre-modern Morocco, Mawlāy Ismā'īl's death in 1139/1727 ushered in another period of *fitna*. The source of the *fitna* was similar to that which had launched the *fitna* during the Sa'dī period: competing princes from the ruling family sought to establish their own claims for the sultanate at the expense of other princes. There were a couple of significant differences, however. As mentioned above, Mawlāy Ismā'īl had substantially more sons than the three who competed for political supremacy following the death of Aḥmad al-Manṣūr. In fact, seven sons of Mawlāy Ismā'īl achieved the sultanate at one time or another, and several others were suggested as possible candidates or participated in the unrest by supporting one or another of the candidates. More significant, however, was the role played by the 'Abīd, an organised and fairly cohesive military force that possessed the power and the inclination to serve as kingmakers in the chaotic Moroccan political scene following the death of Mawlāy Ismā'īl. No comparable force had existed during the Sa'dī era, which lent a completely different tone to the 'Alawī *fitna* of 1139–70/1727–57.

The twelfth/eighteenth-century 'Alawī *fitna* also lacked the religious dimensions of the eleventh/seventeenth-century Sa'dī *fitna*. The free-for-all over political authority during the early eleventh/seventeenth century included *murābiṭs* such as the Dilā'ī *zāwiya*, jihad warriors such as al-'Ayyāshī, and messianic figures such as the *mahdī* Ibn Abī Maḥallī. Independent operators such as the corsair communities of Rabat/Salé had played a major role, in addition to more traditional players such as the tribal armies of al-Samlālī. In fact, the Sa'dī princes often became secondary figures, with their power limited to urban areas such as Marrakesh and Fez.

During the twelfth/eighteenth century *fitna*, the main groups all fought in the name of an ʿAlawī prince, even if the groups' real power lay in the prince's supporters (as it frequently did). The only religious element was the assumed requirement that the new sultan come from among the ʿAlawī *shurafāʾ*, with the implication that all candidates presumably possessed the same access to Sharīfian *baraka*.The kingmaking role of the ʿAbīd was critical during the ʿAlawī *fitna*. The ʿAbīd put forth candidates that they felt they could control, and they deposed sultans who were perceived to be operating against their interests. Since they commanded the most effective military force in the country, the ʿAbīd could act without restraint in attacking real or presumed enemies, including entire communities. As a result, there were numerous situations in which the ʿAbīd pillaged cities, murdered men, raped women and stole possessions.

Abdallah Laroui explains the chaos of the ʿAlawī *fitna* as arising from the failure of Mawlāy Ismāʿīl's policies much as the Saʿdī *fitna* arose from the failure of Aḥmad al-Manṣūr's policies. The creation of the slave army, says Laroui, 'struck a severe blow at agriculture in the southern oases and in the environs of the cities' by depleting those regions of the manpower necessary to support large-scale agricultural endeavours.[34] Thus, a major source of Morocco's prosperity was crippled. In addition, 'the isolation of the new army from society' meant that there was no restraining influence upon their power once Mawlāy Ismāʿīl was gone. 'The *ʿAbīds*, who were bound by no loyalties whatsoever, were quite capable of serving anyone who paid them. Thus every crisis of the army became a crisis of the state.' The *murābiṭ*s had been marginalised after years of hostility from Mawlāy Ismāʿīl. As a result, they could not provide a check on the power of the military. Finally, 'the main reason for the ʿAlawīte sultan's failure was the incompatibility between his policy and the economic condition of the country, which was no longer capable of supporting an enormous centralised, and moreover parasitic, state apparatus'.[35] The only consistent source of income through which Mawlāy Ismāʿīl could pay for his centralisation project was by implementing exorbitant taxes and by periodically authorising his officials to extort the wealth of opponents, such as the Fezzi elite. Both approaches served to undermine the long-term prosperity of the country and to create widespread resentment, which would burst out into the open once the sultan was gone.

Amidst the revolving door of sultans who were appointed and then deposed during the thirty years between 1139/1727 and 1170/1757, one name continued to reoccur. This was Mawlāy ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ismāʿīl, who reigned six times and was deposed five times. Initially chosen by the ʿAbīd to replace

Mawlāy Aḥmad al-Dhahabī in 1141/1729, Mawlāy ʿAbd Allāh was deposed in 1147/1734, reappointed in 1148/1736, deposed again a few months later, reappointed again in 1153/1740, deposed again in 1154/1741, reappointed a fourth time later that year, deposed a fourth time in 1155/1742, reappointed a fifth time in 1156/1743, deposed again in 1160/1747, and reappointed a sixth time in 1161/1748, after which he reigned continuously until his death in 1170/1757.[36] Mawlāy ʿAbd Allāh was never able to gain control over the entire country, but he did manage to counterbalance ʿAbīd influence through building alliances with the Wadāya and the Middle Atlas Berber Ait Idrasen tribal confederation. His repeated ability to escape elimination by the ʿAbīd eventually contributed to nullifying ʿAbīd control over the political process. By the time his son, Sīdī Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh took power in 1170/1757, an ʿAlawī sultan was able to rule over a largely unified Morocco for the first time in thirty years.[37]

After this chaotic period of *fitna*, the reign of Sīdī Muḥammad III brought welcome relief to the embattled country. During his long reign (1170–1204/1757–90), Sīdī Muḥammad pursued a more decentralised vision of Moroccan governance, reduced the onerous taxes established by Mawlāy Ismāʿīl, streamlined government administration, consolidated the Sharīfian victory over the *murābiṭ*s, systematically replaced the ʿAbīd and Wadāya with a smaller and more decentralised military force based upon *jaysh* tribes, restored Fez as the country's capital for the first time since the Marīnids, and promoted foreign trade to replace the income lost to the *makhzan* through the tax reduction.

In this new accommodating model of leadership, the sultan sought to co-operate with local leaders rather than attempt to implement his authority through force. The *makhzan* appointed governors for key areas, but often would choose men with pre-existing ties to their assigned territory and in many cases granted official recognition to regional chiefs supported by local populations. In conjunction with this policy, Sīdī Muḥammad placed more stress upon the religious significance of his position. Laroui writes that the long-term impact of this approach was that over time 'ʿAlawīte power became stabilised; the dynastic struggles and local revolts lost their virulence precisely because of the more and more religious – that is, abstract – nature of [the sultan's] power.'[38]

An important reason for the success of this policy was the reduction in taxes, which won widespread support for Sīdī Muḥammad. In contrast to his immediate predecessors, Sīdī Muḥammad gained the reputation of a devout and reasonable man rather than a harsh dictator. For his tax reduction policy to succeed, the sultan sought to replace the lost revenues by streamlining administration and aggressively promoting international trade. The *makhzan*'s

finances would now be overseen by a financial officer who implemented a strict accounting system, intended to cut down on waste. The smaller army and decentralised administration also served to reduce government costs.

By promoting trade, Sīdī Muḥammad sought to develop customs duties as the primary source of government revenue. In this venture, the sultan prioritised the development of modern Atlantic ports to attract international shipping. He recaptured Mazagan (al-Jadīda) in 1182/1769, ending more than 250 years of Portuguese control. He also promoted Safi, according a monopoly of trade at that port to Denmark in 1170/1757. But Sīdī Muḥammad concentrated most of his attention on Mogador (Essaouira), hiring foreign advisors to create a modern port and encouraging foreign businessmen to establish offices within the city. The sultan's pursuit of foreign trade alliances is evidenced by his many treaties signed with European powers. His 1191/1777 decree inviting foreign ships to dock and trade in Essaouira was sent to a number of Western powers, including the United States of America, which was still in the process of gaining independence from the British.

Sīdī Muḥammad's emphasis on the sultan's role as *amīr al-muʾminīn* led him to place greater prominence upon religious symbolism and ceremony than any sultan since Aḥmad al-Manṣūr, a ruler he strongly admired and consciously imitated.[39] He promoted a simple, orthodox interpretation of the faith, displaying some sympathy for the revivalist tendencies of the Arabian Wahhābī movement. Like the Wahhābīs, Sīdī Muḥammad sought to marginalise the *murābiṭs*, even as he enforced the privileges of the *shurafāʾ*. He engaged in scholarship and supported an annual theological conference with the *ʿulamāʾ*, practices that would be carried on by his son and successor Mawlāy Sulaymān. Sīdī Muḥammad's rapprochement with the *ʿulamāʾ*, so actively repressed by his grandfather, was expressed in his decision to restore the capital to Fez.

Although Sīdī Muḥammad's approach restored peace to Morocco, it can also be seen as representing *makhzan* acceptance of a more limited role and as ushering in an era of weak central government, small and ineffective armies, and financially challenged administrations. Laroui writes, 'As reorganized by Muḥammad III, the ʿAlawīte regime did not command; it negotiated … The system already contained within it the seeds of foreign intervention, for it depended more and more on foreign commerce that was dominated by foreigners.'[40] Although Mawlāy Sulaymān would initially reverse his father's preference for foreign trade, by the end of his reign he was forced to turn to it again in search of funds. Sīdī Muḥammad's decentralised, negotiating approach to rule was followed by most of his successors until the end of the

nineteenth century CE. The spiritual aura of the ʿAlawī *amīr al-muʾminīn* increased and the sultan came to be viewed as the only figure who could arbitrate between the multiple interests that divided his diverse country. In fact, this was the only way that a weak *makhzan* could maintain its titular authority over all of Morocco.

Conclusion

Most historians view the tenth/sixteenth to twelfth/eighteenth centuries as a time of decline for the Islamic world in general and Morocco in particular. Nineteenth-century CE European visitors consistently commented on how isolated, traditional and backward the country appeared. Moroccan visitors to Europe during that period repeatedly marvelled over the scientific and technological advancements that they observed and bemoaned the dilapidated state of affairs in their own country.[41] Beyond the subjective observations of eyewitnesses, several factors confirm their conclusions. For example, whenever Moroccan armies fought European armies in the nineteenth century CE, they were quickly and decisively defeated. Trade agreements signed between Morocco and the European powers were heavily weighted in favour of European interests. In fact, Morocco's history during the nineteenth century CE reflects a steady increase in European influence, culminating with the establishment of the French protectorate in 1330/1912.

How had conditions reached such a state? European historians often blame the traditional, 'isolated' and 'irrational' nature of Moroccan society, the divided populace (Arab/Berber, rural/urban, *murābiṭ*s/*ʿulamāʾ*, etc.), and the closed-minded religious 'fanaticism' and 'fatalism' of a people who failed to grasp the significance of transformations taking place in the wider world. Moroccan historians such as Laroui and El Mansour challenge the colonial historiography, seeing the problem as more structural in nature. Between the tenth/sixteenth and the twelfth/eighteenth centuries, they argue, the Maghrib was divided between Ottoman and Moroccan spheres, and the state became disconnected from the people that it ruled. Breaking the 'Khaldunian Cycle' of tribal-based governments arising from religious revivalist movements, Moroccan governments based their legitimacy upon a Sharīfian ideology that sought to monopolise religious and political authority within the hands of a specific holy family whose *baraka* enabled it to overcome the inherent divisions within Moroccan society.

From such a standpoint, other authorities appeared to be threats that the government sought to eliminate. Thus the Saʿdīs repressed the *murābiṭ*s once

their dynasty achieved pre-eminent power, even though support from the religious orders had been instrumental in their rise. The ʿAlawīs continued this policy and also worked to restrict the influence of the *ʿulamāʾ*, which meant that the tenth/sixteenth to twelfth/eighteenth centuries were difficult for the city of Fez. Both dynasties attempted to break free from dependence upon tribal armies; the Saʿdīs through the use of renegades and Andalusī warriors, and the ʿAlawīs through a professional slave army. In both cases, the military largely consisted of individuals who were disconnected from Moroccan society, a fact that would have terrible repercussions during the periods of *fitna*.

Despite the country's close proximity to Europe and its ongoing trade relationships with European powers, the Moroccan dynasties seemed oblivious to the sources of Europe's growing success. The greatest Moroccan sultans were mostly preoccupied with restoring a lost caliphal glory (al-Manṣūr) or waging a hopeless jihad against expanding European power (Mawlāy Ismāʿīl). They often seemed unaware of the country's limitations vis-à-vis the European states or the Ottoman empire. Nor did they promote a long-term plan to stabilise the Moroccan society or economy. With few exceptions, the sultans did not encourage the creation of a Moroccan industry. Instead, they looked for revenue from outside sources (conquests, trade, ransoming captives) or through repressive taxation. Their administrations remained personal rather than institutional, even when sultans such as al-Manṣūr or Mawlāy Ismāʿīl intentionally sought to imitate Ottoman successes in this area. The personal basis of their rule became abundantly clear when these strong sultans died and Morocco fell into extended periods of violent *fitna*. In fact, most sultans were too preoccupied with trying to gain or retain power even to begin to consider ways to improve Morocco's long-term situation vis-à-vis the Europeans.

Sīdī Muḥammad III's decentralised modus vivendi with the regional shaykhs was perhaps the most realistic approach for establishing peace within the country and maintaining a central (albeit largely symbolic) place for the dynasty. In fact, the religious significance of the sultan may have been the most important factor allowing the ʿAlawīs to survive the long period of European interference and dominance that lay ahead. But it was also an admission of defeat: a recognition that it was no longer possible to govern Morocco through a central *makhzan*. His policy of promoting foreign trade foreshadowed an increasing European meddling and eventual conquest. It would take a forty-four-year French protectorate finally to implement modern systems of governance and administration within Morocco.

But it is possible to overstate this argument. The tenth/sixteenth to twelfth/eighteenth centuries also witnessed successes. In the aftermath of the collapse of

al-Andalus, Morocco became the main site for Andalusī resettlement and the primary heir to an important Hispano-Maghribi cultural heritage. Although colonial historians dismissed Moroccan culture during this era as 'imitative' and 'stagnant', Moroccans sustained and developed an important cultural heritage, even adopting Andalusī music and art as central parts of Moroccan culture. The establishment of the Sharīfian dynasties produced the most durable form of government in the Islamic world: a flexible system that was ultimately able to adapt to the modern era while maintaining a cultural diversity that enriches Moroccan society to this day. When compared to the modern experience of other Islamic countries, Morocco's post-colonial 'growing pains' have been relatively mild, a situation at least partially due to the symbolic power and mediating ability of the Sharīfian system, as well as to the political talents of individual sultans. Morocco's strong sense of self-identity, encouraged by Saʿdī and ʿAlawī sultans who differentiated their state from that of the Ottomans, laid the foundations for the creation of Moroccan nationalism in the twentieth century CE. The outlines for modern Morocco first began to take shape in the critical era of the tenth/sixteenth to the twelfth/eighteenth centuries.

16 *Moroccan rulers (tenth–twelfth/sixteenth–eighteenth centuries)*

Waṭṭāsids (in Fez, no functional control in southern regions)
Muḥammad al-Burtugālī (910–32/1504–26)
Abū ʾl-ʿAbbās Aḥmad (932–55/1526–48)

Saʿdīs (915–1069/1510–1659)

Muḥammad al-Qāʾim bi amr Allāh (in Sūs) (915–23/1510–17)
Aḥmad al-Aʿraj: (in Sūs) 923–30/1517–24; (in Marrakesh) 930–51/1524–44
Muḥammad al-Shaykh: (in Tārūdānt) 930–51/1524–44, (in Marrakesh) 951–51/1544–9, (over all Morocco from Marrakesh) 955–64/1549–57
ʿAbd Allāh al-Ghālib: 964–81/1557–74
Muḥammad al-Mutawakkil: 981–3/1574–6
Abū Marwān ʿAbd al-Malik: 983–6/1576–8
Aḥmad al-Manṣūr al-Dhahabī: 986–1012/1578–1603
Note: Between 1012/1603 and 1016/1608 multiple contenders took control of Marrakesh at various times. Between 1012/1603 and 1022/1613 multiple contenders took control of Fez. The main contenders for power during this period were three sons of Aḥmad al-Manṣūr (Muḥammad al-Shaykh al-Maʾmūn, Mawlāy Zaydān al-Naṣir and Abū Fāris), along with one son of al-Maʾmūn (ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Shaykh al-Maʾmūn).
Mawlāy Zaydān al-Naṣir: (in Marrakesh) 1016–37/1608–27 (driven from Marrakesh by Ibn Abī Maḥallī 1021–2/1612–13)
ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Shaykh al-Maʾmūn: (in Fez) 1022–33/1613–24

ʿAbd al-Malik ibn al-Maʾmūn: (in Fez) 1033–6/1624–7
Muḥammad Zaghuda ibn al-Maʾmūn: (in Fez) 1036–7/1627–8
ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Zaydān: (in Marrakesh) 1037–40/1627–31
al-Walīd ibn Zaydān: (in Marrakesh) 1040–5/1631–6
Muḥammad al-Shaykh al-Aṣghar ibn Zaydān: (in Marrakesh) 1045–64/1636–53
Aḥmad al-ʿAbbās ibn Muḥammad al-Shaykh ibn Zaydān: (in Marrakesh) 1064–9/1653–9

Seventeenth-century *fitna* (1012–79/1603–68)

Abū ʾl-ʿAbbās ibn Abī Maḥallī: (in Sijilmāsa) 1019–21/1610–12, (in Marrakesh) 1021–2/1612–13
Bū Ragrāg republic (in Salé/Rabat): Supported largely by corsair activities, boosted by an influx of Moriscos expelled from Spain between 1018/1609 and 1023/1614, and encouraged by the weakness of central government in Morocco, Rabat vacillated between formal allegiance/functional independence from the Saʿdī sultans, establishment of a separate city-state (1036–47/1627–37), and domination by northern powers al-ʿAyyāshī (1040–51/1631–41), Zāwiya Dilāʾ (1051–74/1641–64) and al-Khiḍir Ghaylān (1074–6/1664–6). It was finally conquered by Mawlāy al-Rashīd in 1076/1666.
Zāwiya Dilāʾ (led by Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr 1021–46/1612–36, Muḥammad al-Ḥājj 1046–79/1636–68): gained control of most of northern Morocco (Spanish enclaves excepted), including Meknes in 1049/1640, Salé/Rabat, Tetouan, the Gharb, and Fez in 1051/1641. They also briefly controlled Sijilmāsa and Tāfīlālt in 1056/1646. However, they lost most of their holdings to al-Khiḍir Ghaylān and Mawlāy al-Rashīd between 1070/1660 and 1079/1668.
Muḥammad al-ʿAyyāshī: led jihad against the Spanish in northern Morocco, commanding various Arab tribes in the north, and sometimes Salé, Tetouan, Taza and their regions between 1023/1614 and 1051/1641.
Yaḥyā b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥāḥī: (in Tārūdānt) 1022–35/1613–26
ʿAlī Abū Ḥassūn al-Simlālī: (in Sūs) 1035–70/1626–60; also ruled Draʿa, Sijilmāsa and Tāfīlālt from 1040/1630 to 1050/1640
Aḥmad al-Khiḍir Ghaylān: (in Qṣar al-Kabīr/Rīf) 1063–74/1652–64, (in Rabat/Aṣīla) 1074–9/1664–8

ʿAlawīs (1041–1231/1631–1822)

Mawlāy al-Sharīf: (in Tāfīlālt) 1041–5/1631–5
Muḥammad b. al-Sharīf: (in Tāfīlālt) 1045–74/1635–64
Mawlāy al-Rashīd: (in Tāfīlālt) 1074–6/1664–6, (in Fez) 1076–81/1666–70, (over all Morocco) 1081–2/1670–2
Mawlāy Ismāʿīl: 1082–1139/1672–1727
Aḥmad al-Dhahabī: 1139–41/1727–9
Mawlāy ʿAbd Allāh: 1141–70/1729–57 (deposed five times by ʿAbīd and replaced by various pretenders, but managed to regain power every time up to his death in 1757; r. 1141–7/1729–34, 1148/1736, 1153–4/1740–1, 1154–5/1741–2, 1156–60/1743–7, 1161–70/1748–57)
Muḥammad III b. ʿAbd Allāh: 1170–1204/1757–1790
Mawlāy Yazīd: 1204–6/1790–2
Mawlāy Hishām: 1206–7/1792–3
Mawlāy Sulaymān: 1207–35/1793–1822

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9. Cook, *The hundred years war*, 259–65.
10. On al-Manṣūr's wealth, see *Les sources inédites de l'histoire du Maroc de 1530 à 1845* (LSIHM). Première série, dynastie saadienne (1530–1660). Archives et bibliothèques d'Angleterre, t. II, Paris, 1925, 87–8, 146, 187.
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20. al-Fishtālī, *Manāhil al-ṣafā*, 67–73; John Hunwick, *Timbuktu and the Songhay Empire: Al-Sa'dī's Ta'rīkh al-sūdān down to 1613 and other contemporary documents*, Leiden, 1999, 294–9.
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Chapter 16: Sharīfian rule in Morocco (tenth–twelfth/ sixteenth–eighteenth centuries)

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